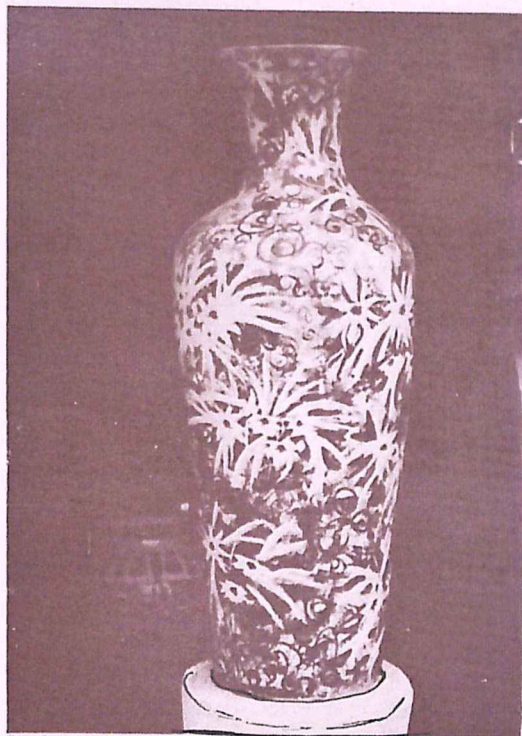


GRAMODAYA SANGH BHADRAVATI

Dist. Chandrapur
Maharashtra

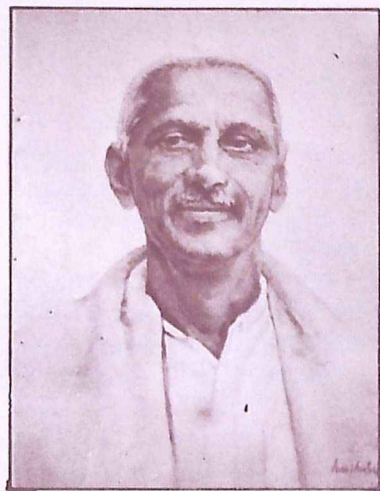
March 14, 1993



SUCH DECORATIVE WARE IS
PRODUCED ON TRADITIONAL
POTTERS WHEEL IN
GRAMODAYA SANGH

The revival of village industries is but an extension of the Khadi effort. Hand-spun cloth, handmade paper, hand-pounded rice, home-made bread and jam, are not uncommon in west. only, there they do not have one hundredth of the importance they have in India. For with us, their revival means life, their destruction means death, to the villagers, as he who runs may see. Whatever the machine age may do it will never give employment to the millions whom the wholesale introduction of power machinery must displace.

- MAHATMA GANDHI



SHRI. R.K. PATIL
FOUNDER PRESIDENT

Background

It was in 1955, during the zenith of Bhoodan movement, started by Acharya Vinoba Bhave, a young person named Sri. S. Krishnamurthi Mirmira bursting with youthful vigour and enthusiasm for reviving rural India by introducing better technology in order to eradicate skin deep poverty, selected a village and settled in order to achieve over-all development of the village through development of the traditional craft. Mirmira was a ceramist, technically qualified at Bangalore (South India) went to Wardha on an invitation from Dr. J.C. Kumarappa, a Gandhian economist, in the year 1948 and joined All India Village Industries Association in Wardha. He conducted a good lot of experiments on rural pottery for almost 6 years. In order to have the first hand experience of village life in various parts of India, he wandered throughout the country under the aegies of Bhoodan movement. The continuous wandering for two years throughout India, Shri. Mirmira could learn a lot; but this could not satisfy him because; he was of the opinion that a person like himself who had something to create livelihood for a few hundred persons should work in Technical field. Such type of work should be attended by other type of workers. Acharya Vinoba Bhave also agreed with this view of Shri. Mirmira and permitted him to work for the development of Rural Pottery only instead of going round the country of Bhoodan work. After ventilating the mental eagerness by Shri. Mirmira for such a rural work to his elders like Acharya Vinoba Bhave. Shri. Annasaheb Sahasrabuddhe and Shri. R.K. Patil he decided to choose and settle in a village named Bhadrawati in Chandrapur District in Maharashtra State, India.

Many persons including Vinobaji wanted him to stay and start the pottery work in Wardha but the same could not be materialised due to the reason that good plastic Red clay suitable for improving the traditional pottery, was not found in Wardha. Village Bhadrawati was chosen by Shri. Mirmira due to the following reason:-

- (1) This village had plenty of tanks having good plastic Red clay suitable for the improvement of traditional pottery. Moreover, a colony of potters were living and working in the village.
- (2) This village was nearest to Wardha having the required facilities with an approach of rail and motorable road.
- (3) Shri. R.K. Patil, Ex-minister and the then sitting M.L.A. from this place was quite keen in such a project to be started as Mahatma Gandhi had asked him to organise such a project for local potters of Bhadrawati.

Shri. Mirmira came to this village from Wardha, all of a sudden, without any previous acquaintance or introduction and started living in this village. Being a stranger, he had to accomodate himself in temples and other unwanted places for sometime.

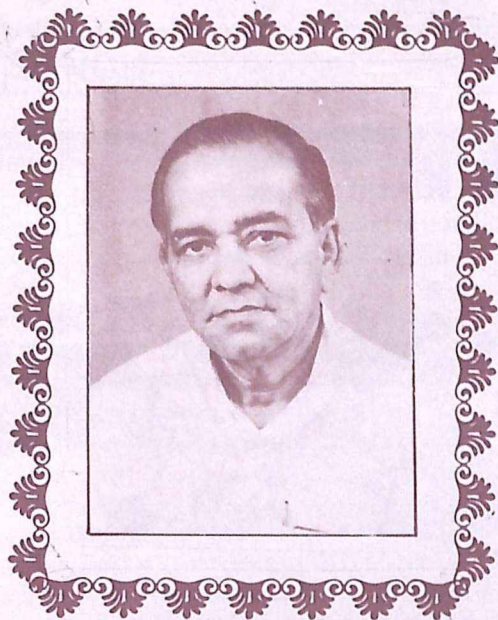
He came here as a Gramsevak (village service person) of Gandhi Smarak Nidhi, with a monthly allowance of Rs. 100/-. But due to some misunderstandings with the authorities of Gandhi Smarak Nidhi, he had to forego his monthly allowance within a couple of months. He was left alone in a new place without any assistance. By this time, 3-4 months had lapsed and faint acquaintance was established by Shri Mirmira in the village. He offered his services to the local potters and in return he asked for food. Before some system could be achieved Shri. Mirmira had to sleep many nights without food. It was rather cumbersome to ask others for food everyday for

two times for an educated young man. Peanuts and a cup of tea was his best meals for many months. Very common to the Indian culture, many in the village, both well to do as well as poor could not tolerate a young social worker to starve in their village. Invitations poured in from many sources for feeding this young social worker. But full with ideals, Shri. Mirmira did not want to accept food for all the days continuously for a week from a single house. He fixed each day, in a week per family. In return, he started working among potters cleaning the village often, teaching the adults in nights. The ideal behind this was that free food without any gainful returns is equal to thieving according to many spiritual books as well as Gandhiji. This type of patronage went on almost up to two years till he established an organisation.

Shri. Mirmira, being a qualified and experienced person in pottery industry, started visiting traditional potters daily and telling them about the various improvements that have taken place in the world, especially in pottery. In order to create confidence among the potters, he started working among them. Potters used to boycott one another and were not attending ceremonial or social gatherings due to their petty differences. Even if a person among them dies they used to boycott the funeral ceremony due to personal quarrels. Drinking and gambling were rampant among potters. Social taboos like untouchability were prevalent very much. School going tendency was almost nil among youngsters. Sanitation and hygiene was completely neglected due to ignorance. Polygamy was quite prevalent among the people. The working hours among potters was more than 12 to 14 hours a day and all the family members including children were working. In return, the family used to earn about Rs. 20 to Rs. 25 per week for all the family members. They were somehow able to feed themselves because of the Barter system prevailed in the rural areas. They used to get grains in exchange to pots which was fetching more in quantity than the selling price for money. Clay and fire-wood were available free of cost.

If a person fell sick there was no facility for any treatment by a qualified doctor except village quack doctors. In a way, it was a fulltime and all round job for a social worker.

Shri. Mirmira didnot have even a single penny with him when he started work in this village. In order to create some type of common fund and to create confidence among them he introduced a unique system and that was to donate a pot for the community by each family after the weekly oven firing. 35 pots used to be collected as gifted pots from 35 families of potters which were auctioned the same day to business people and collected cash. The money was kept as common fund which was lent as loan for a short period to the members of the community. The loan given to many potters was returned regularly but also voluntarily with interest paid on the same. This created confidence on the collective and voluntary efforts of Shri. Mirmira. Previous to the system of loan given from common fund, money-lenders in the village used to lend money and collect huge percentage of interest. Red bricks and country roofing tiles were produced only by Harijans (so called untouchables) and not by caste Maratha potters in this region. There was a social taboo for a person who goes for such work from potters community. Shri. Mirmira explained to them that there should not be such a taboo with regard to any untouchable feelings in the Society. Shri. Mirmira himself being a brahmin by birth, actually worked in Brick-making for a few months and showed them that nothing ill had happened. Also better wages was paid to the potters and also the profit accrued, convinced them that there was no meaning in such senseless taboos. Potters used to sell their pots in the weekly markets and there used to be 30 to 35 shops; One for each family, they used to compete among themselves and thus sell the pots at a very low price. Shri. Mirmira Demonstrated by pooling all the pots at a place and selling for a fixed price. By this the returns were 2 to 3 times more than they used to get by mutual competition. The profit thus accrued was added to the common fund.



SHRI S. KRISHNA MURTHY MIRMIRA
FOUNDER-EXECUTIVE PRESIDENT



CHILDREN RECREATION CENTRE NEHRU VIDYA MANDIR
RUN BY GRAMODAYA SANGH.

IDEALS BEHIND THE SANGH

Shri. Mirmira was quite clear in his mind before establishing the institution "Gramodaya Sangh" that, unless the age-old rural crafts were improved upon introducing latest technological development, there was no chance for the village to become better only by the improvement of the Agriculture. Vast unproductive labour force living in villages is the main cause for utter poverty and unless the burden on agriculture is lessened and divert the labour force towards the production of consumer goods in villages, poverty in the country cannot be removed.

The second point was that there was a myth among sophisticated scientists and technologists that technical developments in the country on a centralised basis is the only solution to eliminate poverty as our country is rural based one and 80% of the population is living in villages scattered all over India. Unless these millions are not made to work and produce required things at their doors on improved basis, the country would not get rid of poverty.

Meantime, for a healthy and continuous type of constructive work it was felt that an organisation was essential and efforts were made in this regard. A Public Trust called "GRAMODAYA SANGH" was organised with the help of Veteran Gandhite, Shri. R.K. Patil a well known person for his honesty and integrity who offered himself to be the president of the new organisation without any hesitation. He has declassified himself in spite of being an I.C.S. and an Ex-minister. As the whole thinking of the sangh was, based on Sarvodaya ideology, even in nominating the members of the Sangh, it was kept in mind to embrace all sections of persons including political parties. It was clearly mentioned in the memorandum of the Sangh that as such, it does not subscribe to any political party and all members agreed to co-operate in this. In the month of August, 1955, Gramodaya Sangh,

was formed and registered. No doubt an institution was formed, but there was not a single penny to spend on initial work. The members of the newly formed organisation donated Rs. 5/- each to register the institution. With such acute financial difficulty Gramodaya Sangh was organised. As the first and foremost activity of the Sangh. Shri. Mirmira thought of organising the common sales of the potters product in order to get them a better returns. Also it was the easiest, as there was no other facilities to start pottery production. He started collecting pots for a common sales. But to his surprise, potters were not honest in supplying quality goods and being too greedy, they started producing sub-standard pots. Nobody was ready to go round the villages to sell pots. Inferior quality added to the losses. He had to abandon this programme of common market. This bitter experience made Shri. Mirmira to incur loss on both ways viz. no sale of pots and accumulation of inferior quality pots. He had to abandon this programme of common market. This bitter experience made Shri. Mirmira to conclude that Indian potters due to their age long economic suffering, were selfish and self-centred one, and did not want to live as a community. He also inferred that craftsmen should be made to work under an organised way for their own benefit. Otherwise they would be cutting each others throat by mutual unhealthy competition.

With this background based on experience, Shri. Mirmira surveyed the market to find out the pottery products, suitable to be adopted by the potters in a rural area. The survey gave a clue to take up certain marketable items, on an organised production basis under one roof. This was the inference acquired after conducting many experiments on individual basis. According to the survey, Mangalore type roofing tiles were in great demand. Fortunately, this village had good deposits of plastic red clay suitable for roofing tiles.

REGIONAL POTTERY TRAINING CENTRE

Before organising production units, training to the local potters in some of the improved techniques were essential and therefore a pottery training centre was started with the help of Khadi & V.I. Commission. Five months training course was started in 1956, which was converted into 10 months course afterwards. Trainees from all over India came here and got training in two types of pottery.

- (1) Building materials including Mangalore type roofing tiles.
- (2) Whitewares.

The manufacturing of Mangalore type of roofing tiles was new to this region of the country. But this institution conducted field trails in finding out simple production units based on minimum investment. Training in roofing tiles was started at the first instance.

This pottery training centre trained a number of youngsters in various types of ceramic products and most of them are engaged in various production units in the country. It is a matter of pride for this training centre to say that most of the trainees have been employed and thus it was found to be useful and successful. The quality of training is found to be useful because even the big factories request this centre to spare trained persons for their factories. Here is the short report of the training centre :-

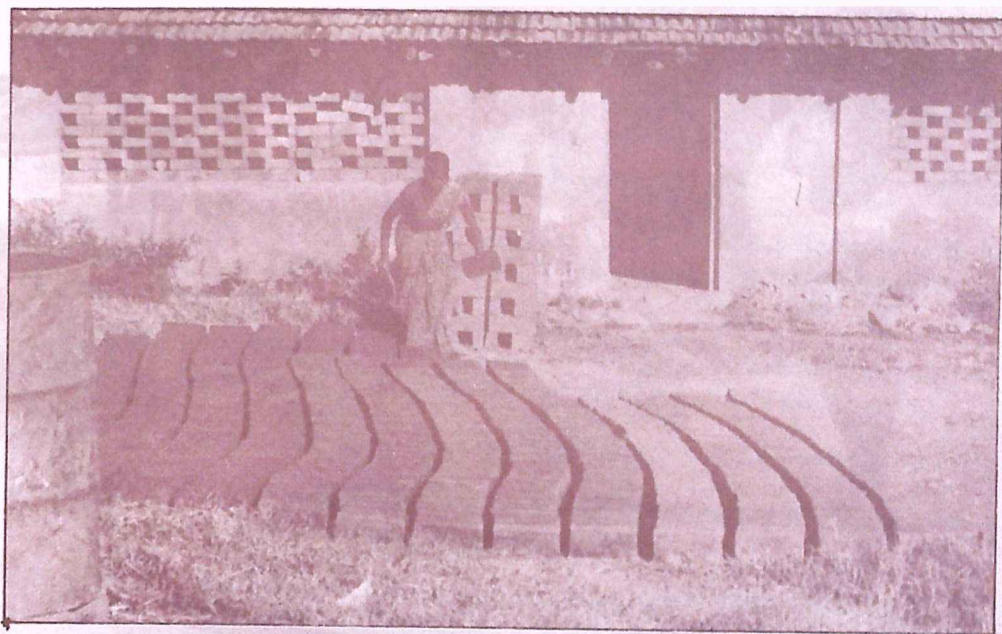
Date of start	: 1st February 1956.
No. of trainees trained upto March 1990	: 1120 persons
Total employed upto March 1990	: In institution - 30% In Co-operative Society 20% as self-employed - 10%

After 35 years of training experience it is suggested that any training programme will be purposeful, provided production units are organised for the employment of the trained persons. Gramodaya Sangh tried the above suggestion by establishing 34 production units of pottery for employing the trainees in all over India.

A Successful Method Of Organising Small Size Producers Co- Operative Societies.

Within these 43 years of independence to our country, a good lot of efforts were made to train persons in various crafts and formed producers co-operative societies for traditional craftsmen. But unfortunately the training in craft didnot have a purposeful follow up programme. Even if there were, they failed as the trainees were not taught efficiently enough in the craft, so that, after training they could earn a decent living. The producers co-operative Societies of the craftsmen were formed but most of them failed because -

- (1) The supervisors as well as managers of the Co-operative Societies did not have good experience in technique, trade and management. Purchasing of sub-standard and wrong machinery caused loss to the Socieity.



BRICK PREPARATION



TRADITIONAL POTTER AT HIS WHEEL WORK

- (2) Bureaucratic red tapism in offices and banks not only delayed in releasing the sanctioned funds but also not releasing the same in full in time.
- (3) The funds being released in small instalments in many cases, the Societies could not be able to purchase required machinery and equipments and thus became non-beneficial.
There was every chance for misusing the money otherwise.
- (4) Above all, dishonesty of organisers and managers of the Co- operative Societies, was the main cause for misuse of fund of Co- operative Societies. This happened due to the negligence in not inspecting frequently by the authorities.

After studying the reasons for the failure of the most of the Co- operative Societies of the craftsmen Gramodaya Sangh, after much thought, found out a remedy for such failures. The remedy was :-

- (1) No cash amount, to be released to the Organisers or Managers of the Co-operative Societies.
- (2) A fully established production unit with the assistance of experienced technicians the unit has to be established and allowed the artisans to work for some time.
- (3) When the trained craftsmen, cum-members of the above unit continue to work for some time in an efficient manner in the already established unit, a sincere, honest and hard working educated person should be selected as supervisor or a manager and then hand over the working unit to the members of the Co- operative Societies.

This method of handing over a working production unit will be avoiding misuse of funds and establishment of inefficient production unit. With experience, a producers Co-operative Society was formed and allowed the trained persons to work. It was found that the unit was functioning successfully for the last 30 years without any problem of misusing funds.

Gramodaya Sangh tried 2-3 producers Co-operative Societies of craftsmen after training and found that they are functioning successfully without any brand of misuse of funds, all these 30 years.

MANGALORE TYPE ROOFING TILES

The organiser of this institution was in the know of the problems of engaging the trained persons after the completion of training. After a thorough survey of the area, it was found to be fetching better price. This type of tiles were new to this area and had good market. It was decided to establish a unit of Mangalore type of roofing tiles here, to engage some of the trained persons. As there were no funds in the beginning for investment, simple type of wooden dies were prepared and tiles were produced by human efforts. Tiles were baked in ordinary ovens. Though they were crude and heavy, yet they encouraged them to make further efforts in tile production. Within a year or so, with a little financial assistance from Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and Khadi & Village Industries Commission, the tile production unit was better organised by installing a few machines, constructing workshops and erecting kiln with chimney. This helped the unit to produce & installing better tiles in good quantity.

KUMBHAR SOCIETY

In order to engage the trained persons after training and to organise a Co-operative Society to find out how best it could be organised successfully, a Co-operative Society named "Kumbhar Society" was formed involving

all the potters from the colony. Gramodaya Sangh, established a tile unit in the beginning allowed the trained persons to work in it. After some time when workers were confident of running the society on their own strength, the same was transferred to the above Society with assets and liability. Maharashtra State Khadi & Village Industries Board, Bombay assisted the Society with funds.

Potters Society, not only worked well from the beginning but also earned good profits. It assisted from its profits a Balwadi (School for Children) distributed free school books to community students, paid fees and aided some of the village development works. It is a matter of pride to mention here that this potters society stands as one of the best societies having remarkable reputation regarding its good performance but also remained one without any kind of disgraceful acts, generally common in other societies. The Society is entirely managed by the local artisans well trained in management and technique. Due to the performance of the above Society, the economic and social standard of potters in the village has been elevated. Here are some of the figures revealing the achievement of the Society.

Statement as on	: 31-3-1990
Year of start	: 15-6-1957
No. of Share-holder	: 64
Total Capital Investment	: Rs. 8,79,733.00
Total Share Capital formation	: Rs. 8,440.00
Total Working Capital	: Rs. 5,40,000.00

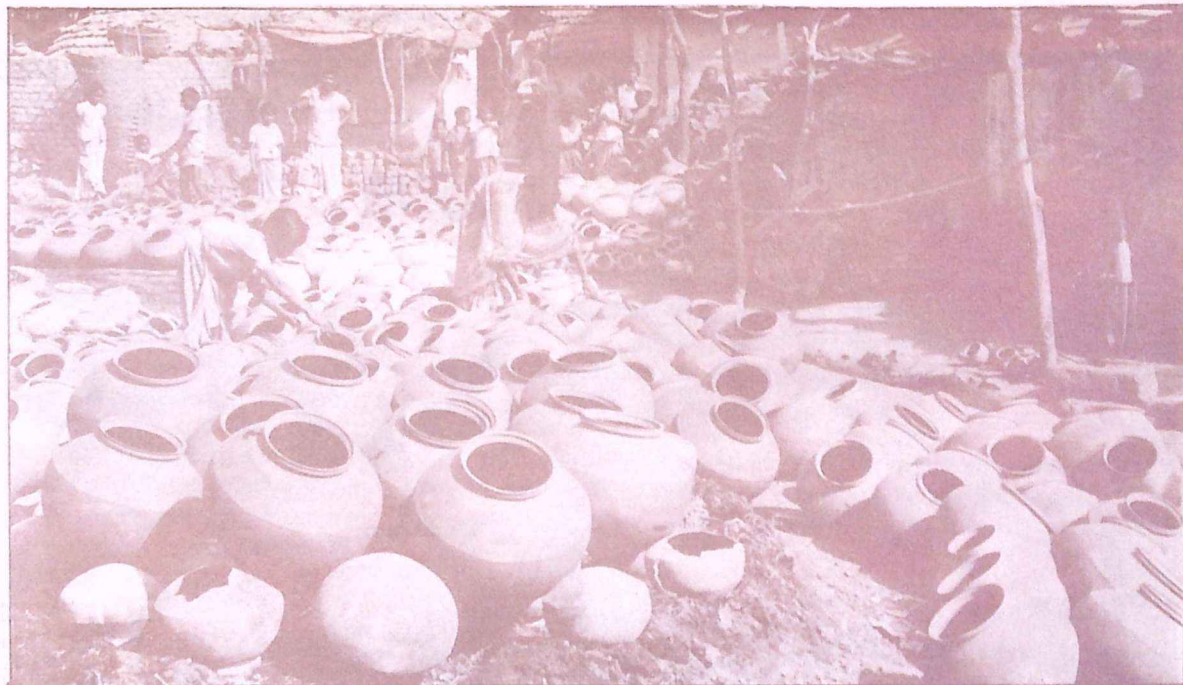
Total Net Profit earned	: Rs. 20,000.00 (Every years)
No. of Employees so far	: 60
Yearly Production	: Rs. 8 Lakhs.

This potters society was formed without much experience in the line. This Society had a few drawbacks. One of them was that even though, it was a producers Co-operative Society in which a worker must be a member and member must be a worker. All the members were not workers and there being many absentee members they were demanding all the benefit of the Society generally shared by working members. A profit will be distributed among the working members as per bye-laws in the form of Bonus etc. It was difficult to get rid of these non-working members from the society, as they were all founder members and predominant persons in the colony who assisted the Society in the initial stage.

BHANDAK CERAMIC CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY :

Bhandak Ceramic Co-operative Society the second in number was established to do further experiments in the co-operative sector.

The traditional potters of India were limited in their production only to unglazed red clay wares called "Terra-Cotta" in which they have vast experience and have developed the techniques of "Terra-Cotta" production to the maximum, using only very simple equipments like potters Wheel and Oven. They could not adopt glazing techniques because of some religious prejudices and taboos. Only a few decades back, industrialists started manufacturing glazed chinawares in big factories.



TRADITIONAL POTTERS COLONY POTS BEING DRIED



TRADITIONAL POTTERS COLONY ARRANGING DRIED POTS FOR BAKING

As the rural community was getting influenced by other sophisticated wares like Aluminium, Chinaware and Plastics, it became imperative on the part of traditional potters to adopt some type of improved pottery so to attract people for their wares, or else, symptoms were being noticed of slow declining of this age-old craft. In order to stop this calamity, this institution tried in training the youngsters in the art of glazed chinawares and imparted training to young potters. While giving the training. It was kept in mind as a future aim, in retaining the age-old artful skill of "throwing the pot on wheel". This skill of the trained fingers is unparallel in the world. Large and thin wares are thrown without any difficulty. Stoneware jars for pickles, jams etc., were taken up as a production programme. In this attempt again Gramodaya Sangh established the glazed pottery unit, allowed the trained candidates to work on production scale. After two years when they got confidence in carrying on production a society named Bhandak Ceramic Society was formed and handed over the same to the workers. All precautions were taken, not to commit the same mistakes, done during forming the Kumbhar Society. All the members enrolled in the above society were among workers only.

In this Society, the technique being a bit more of complicated one, it took quite a long time for the workers to stand in the competitive market. It is one and the only society in the whole of Maharashtra State where, with least investment, glazed pottery is being manufactured on Co-operative basis. The following figures indicate the progress of this society :-

Statement as on	: 31-3-1990
Date of State	: 16-3-1963.
Initial Capital Investment	: Rs. 2,00,000.00
No. of Share Holders	: 37

No. of Workers engaged	: 34
Production Capacity	: Rs. 5 Lakhs

In the above Co-operative Society, the envisaged profits, as per plan could not be achieved due to having only one small size kiln (12 ft. dia). It is experienced that one must have a bigger size and more than one kiln, to exist in a competitive market. Then only such units could become viable.

WHITEWARE PRODUCTION CENTRE

This is a third unit established to engage trained potters. It is a glazed pottery section having facilities to produce stoneware jars by throwing system. By this, it is envisaged to retain the skill of the potters. The local people could well pick-up the techniques and trade of this industry. From management to finish every work is being managed by experienced local people. The quality of the stoneware jars, stand good, if not more, compared to the wares that of well known factories in India. Even though it is a stoneware jars very small factory it earns a small profit. In this unit there are 2 kilns of 18 ft. diameter.

Here are the figures speaking about its progress :

Statement as on	: 31-3-1990
Date of Start	: 1966-67
Total Investment	: Rs. 5 Lakhs

No. of Workers engaged	: 55
Total Production	: Rs. 7.5 Lakhs
Average Profit per year	: Rs. 40,000.00

The glaze pottery sections are fully using local raw-materials available in the district including fire-clay, chinaclay, quartz and coal.

GHORPETH BRANCH

In order to create more employment, one more production unit, as a branch of Gramodaya Sangh was opened at Ghorpeth a village situated 6 miles away from Bhadrawati in the year, 1972. In Ghorpeth two units namely :-

- (1) Mangalore tile unit.
- (2) Glazed pottery unit.

were established. All the experience gained during these years of work were introduced like spacious land adequate storing and work-sheds, big kiln were established. About 100-125 workers were engaged in both section.

Here are the figures concerned to its investment and other facts:-

- (1) Total investment : Rs. 6.25 lakhs
- (2) No. of persons employed : 100-125
- (3) Total production envisaged : Rs. 10 Lakhs

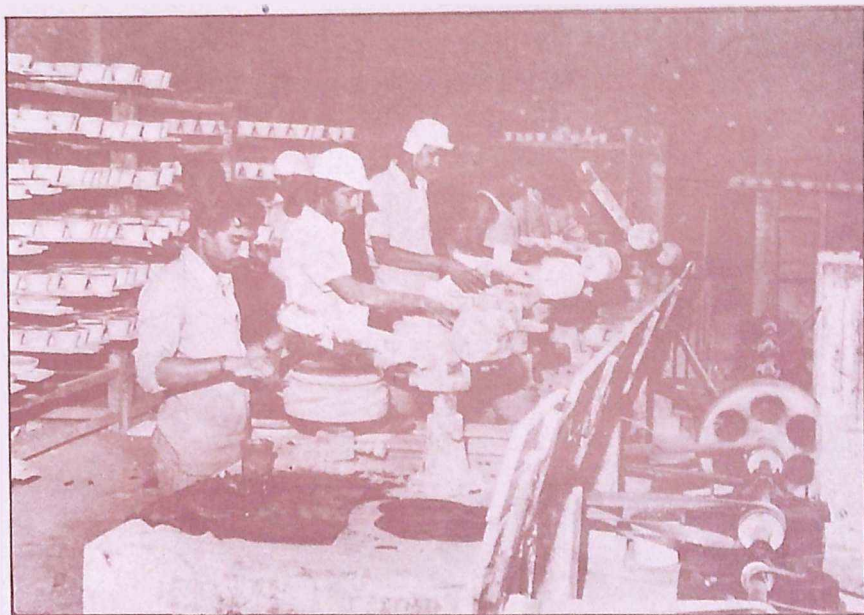
The Ghorpeth unit was transferred to Kumbhar Society, through a sale deed.

OTHER WORKS OF GRAMODAYA SANGH

With these appreciable results achieved in Bhadrawati, regarding rural pottery organisation, people from the Maharashtra State as well as from many other states demanded, the services of Gramodaya Sangh in organising pottery centres, in the district of Chandrapur more than six tile units were organised and put on production. Many other tile units were given advice and consultations. Pottery units were organised in places like Kolhapur, Ratnagiri and Aurangabad in Maharashtra, Roofing tile units were established in Midnapur District, West Bengal, Varanasi and Samastipur in Uttar Pradesh and SaraMohanpur in Bihar.

FLOORING TILE UNIT

By using Plastic Red Clay hard and smooth vitreous flooring tiles are being produced in the European Countries. They are quite attractive and useful in many ways in using them as flooring tiles as well as sanitary tiles in toilets. This was found to be quite useful in India not only to give a cheaper flooring Material to rural people but also



TRAINEES WORKING ON
JIGGER AND JOLLEY WHEEL



TOYS AND DOLLS PREPARED
FROM PLASTIC WET CLAY

helpful in avoiding wasteful use of cement in producing flooring tiles. With the kind financial assistance of Khadi & Village Industries Commission, a Red clay vitreous flooring tiles units was established as a field experiment in the year 1981-82.

The flooring tile unit had a total investment of Rs. 6 lakhs and with a capacity to produce 2000 flooring tiles per day per shift of 6" x 6" size. It was the first of its kind in India.

WOMEN AND CHILDREN PROGRAMME

Gramodaya Sangh was started in 1955 and continued to work having in its aims and objects to work for an all round Socio-economic development of the villages in and around Bhadrawati. But due to various obstacles, the above mentioned all round development could not be done for a long time, except attending on the development of pottery craft. From the year 1981-82, the developmental work of women and children was taken up. Under this section, a Balwadi named as "Nehru Balwadi" was started for the benefit of the children of our workers as well as people who lived around our institution. The speciality of the Balwadi was to make the children understand and learn an all round development by teaching through play, dance, music, story-telling, toy making with clay, painting on paper with water colours etc. Weekly picnic to different nearby places were also conducted regularly. Frequent medical checkups of children by local doctors were also arranged. Contact with parents through children was a regular programme.

Women, in and around Bhadrawati were regularly contacted by frequent visits to the villages. During these visits to the villages, small camps were organised on health, hygiene, social-awareness, in order to educate the women folk.

In order to create gainful employment among house wives who could not go out for jobs, were selected and a ceramic training course was organised.

During this period of training, women were taught to prepare ceramic wares by slip-casting process, using plaster moulds. After training, these women would be provided with piece work job of producing ceramic wares in their own houses. Baking of these wares would be done in a common place like Gramodaya Sangh where kiln facility is there.

BIO-GAS

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One of the young persons in the village was trained in construction of Bio-Gas Plant. He is made independent from the institution in order to work better on his own. This Bio-Gas technician has trained a dozen masons and with their assistance within these 10 years he has constructed more than 1500 Bio-gas plants in various villages in Chandrapur District as well as adjacent Yeotmal District.

The other speciality of this work is that most of the Bio-gas plants are constructed alongwith latrines. This system was not only helped in keeping good village sanitation but also in removing so called caste differences. Every year more and more Bio-gas plants are being demanded by local people.

SIMPLE LATRINES

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In Indian culture it is not the practice to have latrines in homes. In olden days population was very thin and rural people used to go to nearby fields to attend nature's call. To-day population has increased in many fold and villages have become very filthy due to people squatting on both sides of the roads. This was the main reason

why even Mahatma Gandhi was attracted to village sanitation, as first and the fore-most constructive work.

In order to improve the village sanitation, simple latrines were designed and constructed in village houses. These latrines also helped in preparing good manure from night soil. More than 200 latrines have been constructed in and around the village.

The Glazed Red clay latrine pans were locally produced by the potters and such pans could be prepared anywhere in India in a simple method. This helped the local potters to prepare a new item of pottery in villages. Each latrine including the upper structure cost about Rs. 1,500/- only.

SPECIAL POTTERY TRAINING PROJECT

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Seeing the good work that Gramodaya Sangh had done all these 30 years in the field of Rural Pottery Development Council for the People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART) was kind enough to sanction a project "Special Pottery Training Project" to Gramodaya Sangh. This project had a total sanction of Rs. 44 lakhs for 5 years. The objective of this project was to train 25 organiser trainees for 2 years in pottery technology suitable for the development of traditional potters in improved techniques of pottery.

As a IInd phase of the project these 25 organiser trainees were to survey and select 8 villages having large potters population in 8 states of the country. 25 potters from in each one of the potters village were trained by 3 organiser trainees for one year in improved techniques of pottery.

As a IIIrd phase, from 4th year of the project a production programme was chalked out engaging the trained potters in each village centre. The pottery centres were organised on production and to earn a better living. The organiser trainees not only became well experienced Master craftsmen in pottery but also earned their salaries by the production & sales organised in each pottery centres.

RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT WORK

Gramodaya Sangh Bhadrawati, is an institution mainly devoted for the development of rural pottery. The research & development work conducted here concerned to rural pottery exclusively :-

- (1) The high temperature glazed white-ware pottery which was not known to the traditional potters, was taught to the local potters by Gramodaya Sangh. The trained boys from the community are not only working and earning better wages but also become experienced ceramic technicians.
- (2) Whiteware glazed pottery was perfected with raw-materials available locally i.e. within the district Chandrapur, Maharashtra.
- (3) The local talents of traditional potters were tapped, given training in the production of better and artistic wares.
- (4) Producers Co-operative Societies of improved pottery with limited investment were established and demonstrated its successful implementation without any misappropriation of fund etc. In these co-operative societies, potter boys of lower education were trained and appointed as supervisors and Managers who are running the co-operative societies successfully.



GLAZE BEING SPRAYED ON GREEN
POTTERY WARES



GLAZE DIPPING

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- (5) These pottery production units were established with least investment and maximum employment. They proved to be viable units competing with big factories.
 - (6) The local workshops were trained and given an opportunity and they were not up to the standard, still this institution used them in order to improve local workshops, 2-3 local workshop workers were trained well in producing standard pottery machines.
 - (7) Coal fired continuous kiln was designed to bake the roofing tiles in order to use the waste heat and thus bring fuel economy.
 - (8) A defectless glazing process was found out to produce glazed Red clay pottery, useful to the individual traditional potters.
 - (9) An electrically operated potters wheel suitable for studio potters was designed and put into operation.

In west Bengal, Tamilnadu and Karnataka, many tile units were established by Gramodaya Sangh for societies as well as for Private Parties. During such ventures, all the designs and layouts were the original ones drawn by the Sangh. In order to keep up the spirit of Gramodyog (Village Industries) a local workshop person was encouraged and trained to manufacture various pottery machines designed for the developmental activities. Gramodaya Sangh purchased these machinery for field trails. All these experiments were done with its own funds, without any assistance from any other source. These machines were despatched to various states.

On behalf of Gramodaya Sangh, Shri. Mirmira did the consultancy and adviser's job for pottery industry. He was the technical adviser for pottery, to Khadi & Village Industries Commission for a number of years. Shri. Mirmira, who was trained for about 2 years in Japan in Porcelain with indian raw-materials did a good lot of experiments in India to produce thin and translucent porcelain. He was also provided with a scholarship by common wealth foundation London, to study heavy clay technology for 6 months. After his return from United Kingdom he did a number of field trials to introduce clay flooring tiles and mechnised bricks.

Seeing the model work of Gramodaya Sangh in pottery industry Shri. Mirmira was sent to Tanzania by K & V.I.C. as adviser, to survey and plan the pottery industry for the whole country. He stayed there for 6 months and gave a pottery plan, on the experience of Gramodaya Sangh.

Shri. Mirmira has written a book named "Indian Pottery" useful for the pottery Technicians.

OTHER SOCIAL WORK BY GRAMODAYA SANGH

Apart from the pottery development work, Gramodaya Sangh has done good lot of other social work. In the village Bhadrawati. It has organised various, societies in Bhadrawati as follows :-

- (1) Brick Co-operative Society for Harijans.
- (2) Agriculture Co-operative Society.
- (3) Carpenter's Co-operative Society.
- (4) Bomboo Worker's Co-operative Society.

It has also organised co-operative societies outside of Bhadrawati and they are :-

- (1) Bengali refugees potter's co-operative society, Chandrapur.
- (2) Potter Co-operative Society, Sawali, Dist. Chandrapur.
- (3) Shramik Kalyan Sanstha Devarda, Dist. Chandrapur.

From these societies, a good number of employment was offered for the craftsmen.

Gramodaya Sangh has become a nucleus for many social works like Shramdan, village sanitation, health & Hygiene camps.

Regular efforts were made to avoid disputes to be taken to courts from the villages. All the time Sangh acted as vigilant body to maintain peace in the village. Gramodaya Sangh was regularly and continuously propagating against drinking, gambling and other social evils.

Lastly to speak of the work and its achievements by Gramodaya Sangh that, it has given a Blueprint regarding development of rural pottery on improved basis, after incurring all losses for itself while conducting the field trials. The results were very useful to Khadi & Village Industries Commission which works for the development of the village potters. Gramodaya Sangh's work on pottery as village industry has shown a way out for those who were sceptic about the achievements of rural industries based on decentralisation. It has given a guide-line showing that how funds spent on constructive work, could be channelised to create wealth and employment in rural areas. Young village boys have become good technicians standing on their own legs earning a decent

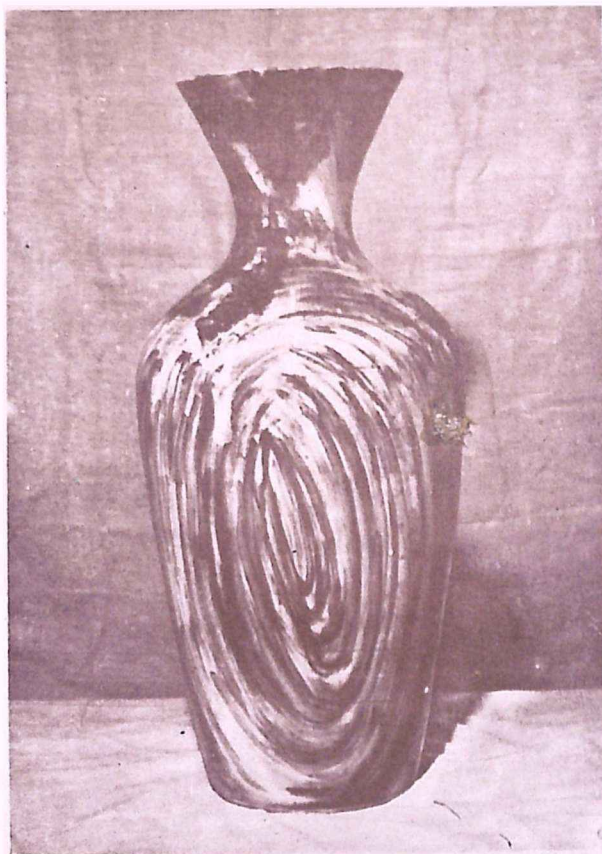
living. The efforts of Gramodaya Sangh has shown how wealth could be brought from cities into the village by such productive programmes. About Rs. 20 lakhs per year was brought into the village by way of sales, employing about 350 workers with total investment of Rs. 15 lakhs. A number of experiments have been conducted in village pottery and results were given to various agencies without charging extra money.

It is concluded that, country like India in which 80% of the total population live in rural areas depending upon a single crop pattern of agriculture, efforts should be made to introduce decentralised production of consumer industries in rural areas and to create new employment and thus reduce burden on agriculture. It also helps stopping exodus to cities in search of jobs.

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GRAMODAYA SANGH'S ACTIVITIES AT A GLANCE

- (1) A pottery training centre to train Master Craftsmen.
- (2) Establishment of pottery production units in order to find out a small but viable production unit.
- (3) Research and development work as regards equipments, tools, kilns, clay mixture, glazes, ceramic colours concerned to the development of rural pottery.
- (4) Bringing up literature on pottery.
- (5) Bio-gas and simple latrine construction.
- (6) Women and Children programme.
- (7) Socio-economic awareness work in surrounding villages.



CERAMIC DECORATIVE WARE